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UNCLAS MAPUTO 000558

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/S, INL/AEE

DOJ FOR OPDAT AND ICITAP

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PHSA](#) [KPAO](#) [MZ](#) [KNAR](#) [SANR](#)

SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTER ENGAGED ON COUNTER-TERRORISM

REF: A. MAPUTO MZ 060803Z APR 04

[1](#)B. MAPUTO MZ 171555Z DEC 03

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: In an April 19 meeting with the Ambassador, Interior Minister Almerino Manhenje described his plans to travel to Texas for a counter-terrorism conference the week of May 3. In addition, Manhenje described his goals of reducing vulnerability to terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and other contraband, as well as money laundering and terrorist financing. He demonstrated an awareness of the problems faced by the GRM in these areas and described the government's interest in USG and other donor assistance in increasing border and port security. The Ambassador thanked the Minister for the cooperation of his staff in coordinating our INL assistance to the Mozambican Police Academy and recent assessment visits by DOJ ICITAP officials to plan further assistance. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) On April 19, the Ambassador called on Interior Minister Manhenje, accompanied by RSO and Econ/Poloff (notetaker); the minister was accompanied by his International Relations Assistant Joachim Bule. Manhenje opened the meeting by describing his invitation from Sam Houston State University to be one of 28 participants in a counter terrorism conference in early May. He will be accompanied by the Vice Rector of the Mozambican Police Academy (ACIPOL), who met the Sam Houston faculty member at ILEA training in Roswell, NM in February 2003. Public Diplomacy funds brought the professor to Maputo in September 2003 for speakers program events and the invitation to the conference results from this new institutional linkage.

[1](#)3. (SBU) In the remainder of the meeting, Manhenje provided his assessment of the challenges faced by his ministry in the areas of counter-terrorism and border security. He acknowledged the weaknesses of his Criminal Investigation Police (PIC) and mentioned the current efforts to implement judicial reform, which would create a Judicial Police on the Portuguese model. He envisions such a new entity would complement the PIC with more highly trained, professional investigators. (Note: the PIC is widely viewed as highly corrupt and ineffective. End Note.) Manhenje referred to Mozambique's activities as the current chair of SARPCCO, the Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization. He recognized the problems faced by the GRM in trying to combat transborder crime and the growing role of Mozambique as a transit country for narcotics, especially cocaine originating in Brazil destined for South Africa.

[1](#)4. (SBU) The minister also referred to a request made by Mozambican Customs to the USG for equipment to give Mozambique the capacity to examine containers at the major ports (Maputo, Beira, and Nacala) and the principal border crossings with South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia. Mozambique has no capacity to patrol its maritime border, with an unprotected coastline twice the length of California (ref A). He is eager for the border police to receive any training that is available from USG agencies and also would welcome any assistance to improve GRM capacity to track money laundering. He noted the demographic factor of the large number of Muslim businesses in the northern provinces involved in importing goods for sale in Mozambique and the difficulty his ministry faces in knowing the real names of account holders and merchants bringing goods through customs (ref B). He also confirmed reports of large numbers of undocumented Pakistani aliens and the more recent trend of Somali refugees entering or transiting Mozambique.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Comment: Minister Manhenje is clearly aware of the challenges the GRM faces and highly interested in further USG assistance. He comes across as well-informed, charming and an intelligent politician, and has proven capable of withstanding criticism in his tenure at Interior. He is one of the younger generation of cabinet heavyweights, and appears to be adept at internal party power maneuvering. His cooperative attitude with the USG seems sincere and his staff has developed good working relations with post and with other international donors.

LA LIME